

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY CALLS FOR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF SCHOOL SAFETY MEASURES
Effort Aimed at Guaranteeing Student Safety

RALEIGH - Gov. Mike Easley today asked Secretary Bryan Beatty of the Department of Crime Control & Public Safety and Attorney General Roy Cooper to coordinate a comprehensive review of North Carolina's school safety programs. The effort is aimed at guaranteeing student safety in the state's schools. Beatty and Cooper will work with the Department of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education and the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to assess current efforts and determine if additional measures should be taken to better protect the state's school students.

"North Carolina is working hard to make certain our schools provide the best possible education to help our students succeed in today's economy, but they cannot learn if they do not feel safe," said Easley. "We have taken action to put school safety plans and programs in place. However, I want to make sure we have all of the tools at our disposal to deal with safety concerns and that we are doing everything we can to prevent incidents such as the ones that happened in Pennsylvania and Colorado."

As part of the effort, Easley also asked the State Board of Education and DPI to ensure school superintendents across the state begin an immediate review of their district's safety plans for completeness and coordination with local emergency response agencies. Easley also asked Health and Human Services Secretary Carmen Hooker-Odom to provide assistance due to the emotional impact the recent incidents may have on students. In addition, the Governor urged Beatty and Cooper to examine the use of technology and protocol measures, student and faculty response as well as the communication between classroom and administrative offices to perceived problems. Easley asked Beatty and Cooper to report back to him with recommendations for needed improvements in two weeks.

"When parents drop their children off at school, they have every right to expect we are doing all we can to provide them a safe and secure environment," said Easley.

North Carolina has been proactive on the issue of school safety since the early 1990s. When Easley was Attorney General, he worked on a review of school safety that resulted in the creation of the N.C. Center for the Prevention of School Violence and the School Resource Officer program. The Center is located in the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and focuses on understanding the problems of school violence and developing solutions to them.

In the 2005-06 school year there were 773 school resource officers working in North Carolina middle and high schools. In 2004-05 North Carolina spent \$26.2 million for school resource officers. The success of